

# Shanghai Municipal Police.

C. I. D.  
I. O. REQ  
No. 559  
Date 25.9.16

Central Police Station.

September 22nd, 1916.

**REPORT ON** Attached Letter Reporting the Existence of a Band of  
Swindlers in the Settlement.

Made by D.S.I. Brewster.

Forwarded by Chief Detective Inspector.

Sir,

The "Band of Swindlers" to whom the writer of the attached letter refers, are very well known in Shanghai and also in other Chinese Cities. The name itself is rather misleading when used in English, as *isah Bah raung* (拆白黨) is a slang term for these people and has no real meaning nor has it a true equivalent in English. For instance the words are invariably used to indicate an individual and not a band or society. Anyone can be a member provided he is young, of good appearance, is a good talker and goes about well dressed. Should he be possessed of the first three qualifications the latter item can be supplied by older hands who have made some money and lend it out at extortionate interest. When equipped as above the young man proceeds to places of amusement where he is likely to meet respectable young girls or concubines of rich men. In the majority of cases he succeeds in entangling one of them with the result that he receives presents of money and jewellery, etc., from them in return for his attention. A little mild extortion is said to be resorted to occasionally but such cases very seldom are brought to the notice of the Police. When they have obtained all they can and in many cases seduced their victims they transfer their attentions elsewhere and commence all over again. These men do not, of course, steal, gamble on a big scale, nor make trouble of any kind which would be likely to attract Police attention. I am also informed that they always pay their way at entertainment establishments, the proprietors of which rather welcome their appearance because of the large number of rich females they

# Shanghai Municipal Police.

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Station.

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## REPORT ON

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bring in their train.

The business is a most contemptable one, abhorrent to respectable Chinese many of whom have had daughters or concubines victimized and ruined by these men but the difficulties of getting them to prosecute are almost insurmountable and the remedy is in their own hands more than in that of the Police.

I cannot find that there are any particular leaders among these men nor that there are any society regulations to which they adhere, beyond the usual unwritten laws which govern all classes and all occupations in China.

Your obedient servant,

W. B. Newlin.  
Detective Sub-Inspector.

Chief Detective Inspector.

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Shanghai, 17th. Sept., 1916.

To the Capt. Superintendent of Police,  
The Cental Police Station,  
Foochow Road, Shanghai.

Sir:

I am a very old resident of Shanghai, and can boast that I know almost everything that is peculiar to this city. What I am now intending to call your attention to is a notorious and immoral element in the native community---and that is the "Band of Swinders" 折白黨. There are two such bands in the foreign settlements and they have proved not only a terror to the moral principle of the city, but have also been a menace to the peace and good order of the community. Each of these bands is composed of about five hundred persons, both male and female, who are scattered about at all the different places of amusements, where they enjoy a special privilege of being admitted free at any time and on any day. This privilege is granted to them by the proprietors of the different amusement places to provide for their quiet; otherwise they have to be liable to molestation and extortion. For instance there are forty members of the band being admitted free by the Loong Fee Bridge New Recreation House and there is a similar number at the Lu Wei Lu and Tien Wei Tien at the corners of Chekiang and Hupeh Roads, and at the Chekiang and Hankow Roads respectively.

The business of the bands is to levy unlawfully a certain amount of fee from every shop on its opening day. This fee is paid on the condition that their members will not trouble the shop in any way after its opening. Their other business is to buy goods on false pretences or through other

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dexterous feats of hand; to abduct girls of rich and respectable families; to keep illegal gambling dens, etc, etc. Those who have fallen victims to them have been numerous enough.

These bands have also their code of laws, which all members have to observe; on breach of which the transgressor has to be expelled. The head and sub-heads of the bands are mostly gentlemanly looking people and the rest are dressed loafer-like. The head is said to have his resort at the tea house Chan Luk 長樂茶居 every afternoon at the corner of Hupeh and Woochow Roads and is also said to dress in a quite different style from ordinary people.

Being a resident of the settlement and interested in the welfare of the community, I make bold to make this appeal to you for your intervention and I should suggest that before carrying out any raid, it would be available to approach the proprietors of the famous places of amusements first, so as to facilitate success.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

H. Jefferson

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for Special Agent

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